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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 003127

SIPDIS

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TAGS: PBTS PREL IR KU IZ

SUBJECT: IRAQI PM ON KUWAIT BORDER INCIDENTS

REF: A. KUWAIT 3287

¶B. KUWAIT 3331

Classified By: Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) In two meetings on July 26 , Prime Minister Ibrahim Jafari raised with the Ambassador the increased tension between Kuwait and Iraq. The PM has received reports from Iraqi officials that Kuwaitis penetrated 25 kilometers into the no-man's land between Iraq and Kuwait. He said the incursion into the territory (still disputed since the 1990-1 Gulf War) is related to water rights. (Comment. the latest MNF-I reporting suggests the disputed territory is actually only a few dozen meters. End comment.)

¶2. (C) Jafari claimed that about 800-900 Iraqis demonstrated against this alleged Kuwaiti incursion. The PM reported that the Kuwaitis, angered by the demonstrations, are considering stopping oil shipments to Iraq. Jafari nonetheless claimed that the Kuwaiti PM promised him this would not occur.

¶3. (C) Jafari is concerned that these alleged reports portray Iraq as weak, and could serve to undermine the Coalition, if it does not respond appropriately. This, in Jafari's thinking, would bolster the anti-Coalition insurgency.

¶4. (C) The Ambassador promised Jafari to review the latest information with U.S. military and intelligence personnel and report back to him.

¶5. (U) REO HILLA, REO BASRA, REO MOSUL, and REO KIRKUK, minimize considered.
Khalilzad